



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF THE CHILDREN WITH MILD AND MODERATE DISABILITIES IN MAINSTREAM CLASSROOMS

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ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to investigate the academic performance of the disabled children in mainstream classroom. For this study a sample of 404 children with mild and moderate disabilities were selected from Shimla and Solan districts of Himachal Pradesh. The result of the study shows that the CWSN are helped and supported by their teachers in their academics in the mainstream classroom. The overall result indicates the maximum help and support to the CWSN by their teachers in their academic performance in mainstream classroom.

KEYWORDS: Academic Performance, Children with Mild and Moderate Disabilities, Mainstream CWSN.

INTRODUCTION:

In the Education history, education of children with special needs was located in settings separated from the general public and from standard education programs. The net result of such education was the substantial segregation of the disabled student. The children with disabilities were initially treated as unwanted and were segregated from other children. Later their education was carried out in special schools. In recent time there has been a shift towards the mainstreaming of the children with special needs. It has been realized by the educationist that education of the persons with disabilities is very crucial for their development and independent living as far as possible which gets reflected through their academic performance in the class.

Academic performance is said to be an important phase of life today. In this rapid advancement in science and technology, the place of education has become so vital that every person wants to educate his/her child. Good academic records and its proper development to a certain extent depict the future of the child. In educational institutions, success is measured by academic performance, or how well a student meets standards set out by local government and the institution itself.

Academic Performance is of paramount importance, particularly in the present socio-economic and cultural contexts. In the school great emphasis is placed on achievement right from the beginning of formal education. The school tends to emphasize on the academic performance of the students. The school performs the function of selection and differentiation among students on the basis of their scholastic and other attainments and opens out avenues for advancement, primarily in terms of performance or achievement. The student at school is trained to accept the hierarchy based on performance. Acceptance of the system of hierarchy in terms of performance helps to integrate the school system in so far as there obtains congruence between the values of a family and those of society.

Academic Performance has a great importance in personal life. Success in academic subjects act as an emotional tonic and any damage done to a child in the home or neighborhood may be partially repaired by success in school. It leads to a better adjustment and success in school or college. It motivates the students to set high goals for themselves. Importance of academic performance can also be judged when we realize fuller and happier life, which we wish for every student, would be impossible unless he has attained a high degree of proficiency in his subjects. Academic performance to a great extent predicts the future of the student. At the time of admission, for entrance in job or for further studies, good academic achievement or performance record is the only recommendation. Therefore, academic performance is the unique responsibility of all educational institutions established by the society to promote a whole-sum scholastic development of the students.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Baker and Walberg (1994) conducted a study on the effects of inclusion on learning and found that students with Intellectual Disability educated in regular classes do better academically and socially than comparable students in non-inclusive settings.

Salend and Duhaney (1999) investigated the impact of inclusion on students with and without disabilities and their educators and found that the impact of inclusion programs on the academic performance and social development of students with disabilities has been mixed. The placement of students without disabilities in inclusion programs does not appear to interfere with their academic performance and has several social benefits for these students.

Peetsma et al (2001) investigated the extent to which pupils in different forms of special primary education and regular primary education differed in their academic development and found that pupils in special education do less well in academic performance than pupils in regular education.

Seetharam (2005) conducted a study on the social integration of children with mild and moderate disabilities in mainstream classroom under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Tamil Nadu and concluded that the disabled students at the primary level have scored more in peer group affiliation and academic performance than the disabled students at middle school level. Psycho-social development stages are significantly related to poor group affiliation and academic performance. Family, annual income, social community status and categories of disability have significant effect on the peer group affiliation, peer assessed behavioral characteristics and academic performance. Socio-Metric status of the disabled students has significant effect on academic performance and all the components of peer behavioral assessment.

Kalita (2007) evaluated the functioning of alternative and innovative education centers with focus on retention of mainstreamed children in the formal schools and concluded that 98.6 percent mainstreamed learners got equal attention from teachers and 96.4 percent responded that their classmates were friendly.

Dessemontet, et.al. (2012) conducted a study comparing the academic progress of students with intellectual disabilities who were served within an inclusion setting as opposed to a special school setting and concluded that inclusion in general education classrooms is an appropriate alternative to an education in separate settings for primary pupils with Intellectual Disability who require extensive support in school.

Vishwakarma and Pal (2016) compared academic competency of children with mild mental retardation studying in integrated and inclusive schools and found that there was no significant difference between integrated and inclusive schools. But the mean value of children of integrated school was much better than inclusive schools. Therefore integrated schools are better in comparison to inclusive schools.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The review of related literature shows that a few research studies have been conducted on the academic performance of the children with mild and moderate disabilities in mainstream classroom. The present study is an attempt in the direction of assessment of the academic integration and support to the Children with mild and moderate disabilities by their teachers in the mainstream classrooms. As this aspect is very significant and therefore it need to be studied so that their academic performance may be enhanced and their integration in the mainstream could be made successful.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Following were the objectives for the study:

1. To explore the various forms of help and support provided by the teachers in helping the disabled children in improving their academic performance in the classroom.
2. To find out the extent to which the disabled children receive help by their teachers in their academic performance.
3. To study the opportunities provided in the school to the children with mild and moderate disabilities helpful in enhancing their academic performance.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was delimited to:

1. Shimla and Solan districts of Himachal Pradesh.
2. Children with mild and moderate disabilities studying in mainstream classrooms.

METHOD

In order to fulfill the objectives of the study, descriptive method of research had been used.

SAMPLE/POPULATION

In the present study all the children with special needs studying in the mainstream classrooms constitutes the population of the study. From the twelve districts of Himachal Pradesh, the two districts namely Shimla and Solan were selected randomly. Out of these two districts, the secondary schools having CWSN studying in them as reported in DISE, 2013-14 were selected for the study. As per the said report, there are 680 and 309 secondary schools in the Districts of Shimla and Solan respectively. CWSN were studying in 263 schools of Shimla district and 136 schools of Solan district. Further, out of 263 CWSN schools of Shimla district, 30 schools and 12 schools from 136 CWSN schools of

Solan district were selected randomly. Whole of the population of male and female studying in the selected schools was taken for the study in the present investigation.

RESEARCH TOOL

The investigator developed the Academic Support Questionnaire for the study. The reliability of the questionnaire came out to be 0.86 and it was taken to be a reliable instrument. For the validity of the questionnaire the experts assessed the content validity in terms of the content of the items and the intelligibility of the questionnaire.

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

The analysis of data pertaining to the help and support and student performance in the class revealing the academic performance of the children with mild and moderate disabilities in mainstream classrooms is as follows:

1. HELP AND SUPPORT IN UNDERSTANDING CONTENT

The frequencies and percentages of the responses given by the disabled children for help and support they get in understanding the content taught in the class are given in Table 1 as under:

TABLE 1 Help and Support in Understanding Content

Item Description	Gender	Response	Disabilities													
			SI		HI		PD		MR		MD		VI		LD	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Teachers Help in Understanding Difficult Content	Female	Yes	24	96.00	09	100.00	19	100.00	08	100.00	07	87.50	88	97.78	23	100.00
		No	01	4.00	00	0.00	00	0.00	00	0.00	01	12.50	02	2.22	00	0.00
	Male	Yes	22	95.65	15	100.00	19	95.00	10	100.00	07	87.50	88	93.62	51	91.08
		No	01	4.35	00	0.00	01	5.00	00	0.00	01	12.50	06	6.38	01	1.92
Extra Instruction by Teacher	Female	Yes	24	96.00	09	100.00	19	100.00	08	100.00	08	100.00	88	97.78	22	95.65
		No	01	4.00	00	0.00	00	0.00	00	0.00	00	0.00	02	2.22	01	4.35
	Male	Yes	23	100.00	15	100.00	18	90.00	10	100.00	08	100.00	92	97.87	51	98.08
		No	00	0.00	00	0.00	02	10.00	00	0.00	00	0.00	02	2.13	01	1.92
Outside Classroom Help by Teacher About Subject	Female	Yes	25	100.00	09	100.00	19	100.00	08	100.00	08	100.00	87	96.67	20	86.96
		No	00	0.00	00	0.00	00	0.00	00	0.00	00	0.00	03	3.33	03	13.04
	Male	Yes	23	100.00	15	100.00	19	95.00	10	100.00	08	100.00	92	97.87	46	88.46
		No	00	0.00	00	0.00	01	5.00	00	0.00	00	0.00	02	2.13	06	11.54
Extra Help by Teachers Outside the Classroom	Female	Yes	24	96.00	09	100.00	18	94.74	08	100.00	08	100.00	88	97.78	22	95.65
		No	01	4.00	00	0.00	01	5.26	00	0.00	00	0.00	02	2.22	01	4.35
	Male	Yes	22	95.65	15	100.00	18	90.00	10	100.00	08	100.00	90	95.74	50	96.15
		No	01	4.35	00	0.00	02	10.00	00	0.00	00	0.00	04	4.26	02	3.85

*SI- Speech Impairment, HI- Hearing Impairment, PD- Physical Disability, MR-Mental Retardation, MD- Multiple Disability, VI- Visual Impairment, LD- Learning Disability.

From the Table 1 it can be observed that 96.00, 100.00, 100.00, 100.00, 87.50, 97.78 and 100.00 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD female and 95.65, 100.00, 95.00, 100.00, 87.50, 93.62 and 91.08 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD male responded that their teachers help in understanding difficult content whereas 4.00, 0.00, 0.00, 0.00, 12.50, 2.22 and 0.00, percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD female and 4.35, 0.00, 5.00, 0.00, 12.50, 6.38 and 1.92 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD male responded that their teachers they do not help in understanding difficult content in the class.

From the Table 1 it becomes clear that 96.00, 100.00, 100.00, 100.00, 100.00, 97.78 and 95.65 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD female and 100.00, 100.00, 90.00, 100.00, 100.00, 97.87 and 98.08 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD male responded that their teachers provide extra instruction to them if needed whereas 4.00, 0.00, 0.00, 0.00, 0.00, 2.22 and 4.35 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD female and 0.00, 0.00, 10.00, 0.00, 0.00, 2.13 and 1.92 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD male responded that their teachers do not provide extra instruction to them if needed in understanding content in the class.

It can be clearly seen in the Table 1 that 100.00, 100.00, 100.00, 100.00, 100.00, 96.67 and 86.96 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD female and 100.00, 100.00, 95.00, 100.00, 100.00, 97.87 and 88.46 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD,

VI and LD male responded that their teachers help them in understanding the subject matter even outside the classroom whereas 0.00, 0.00, 0.00, 0.00, 0.00, 3.33 and 13.04 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD female and 0.00, 0.00, 5.00, 0.00, 0.00, 2.13 and 11.54 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD male responded that their teachers do not help them in understanding the subject matter even outside the classroom.

From the Table 1 it can be clearly observed that 96.00, 100.00, 94.74, 100.00, 100.00, 97.78 and 95.65 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD female and 95.65, 100.00, 90.00, 100.00, 100.00, 95.74 and 96.15 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD male responded that their teachers help them even outside the classroom whereas 4.00, 0.00, 5.26, 0.00, 0.00, 2.22 and 4.35 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD female and 4.35, 0.00, 10.00, 0.00, 0.00, 4.26 and 3.85 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD male responded that their teachers do not help them even outside the classroom.

2. STUDENT PARTICIPATION

The frequencies and percentages of the responses given by the disabled children for their participation in the class are given in Table 2 as under:

TABLE 2 Student Participation

Item Description	Gender	Response	Disabilities													
			SI		HI		PD		MR		MD		VI		LD	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Teachers Permission to Present Project	Female	Yes	22	88.00	09	100.00	17	89.47	07	87.50	08	100.00	82	91.11	16	69.57
		No	03	12.00	00	0.00	02	10.53	01	12.50	00	0.00	08	8.89	07	30.43
	Male	Yes	23	100.00	14	93.33	16	80.00	08	80.00	07	87.50	81	86.17	42	80.77
		No	00	0.00	01	6.67	04	20.00	02	20.00	01	12.50	13	13.83	10	19.23
Teachers Ensures Participation in Project	Female	Yes	23	92.00	08	88.89	19	100.00	08	100.00	07	87.50	80	88.89	22	95.65
		No	02	8.00	01	11.11	00	0.00	00	0.00	01	12.50	10	11.11	01	4.35
	Male	Yes	22	95.65	14	93.33	17	85.00	09	90.00	08	100.00	91	96.81	48	92.31
		No	01	4.35	01	6.67	03	15.00	01	10.00	00	0.00	03	3.19	04	7.69
Permission to Participate in Debate Competition	Female	Yes	22	88.00	08	88.89	18	94.74	04	50.00	06	75.00	82	91.11	12	52.17
		No	03	12.00	01	11.11	01	5.26	04	50.00	02	25.00	08	8.89	11	47.83
	Male	Yes	21	91.30	12	80.00	16	80.00	07	70.00	07	87.50	79	84.04	36	69.23
		No	02	8.70	03	20.00	04	20.00	03	30.00	01	12.50	15	15.96	16	30.77

*SI- Speech Impairment, HI- Hearing Impairment, PD- Physical Disability, MR-Mental Retardation, MD- Multiple Disability, VI- Visual Impairment, LD- Learning Disability.

From the Table 2 it can be observed that 88.00, 100.00, 89.47, 87.50, 100.00, 91.11 and 69.57 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD female and 100.00, 93.33, 80.00, 80.00, 87.50, 86.17 and 80.77 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD male responded that their teachers gives permission to them to present the project assigned to them whereas 12.00, 0.00, 10.53, 12.50, 0.00, 8.89 and 30.43 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD female and 0.00, 6.67, 20.00, 20.00, 12.50, 13.83 and 19.23 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD male responded that their teachers does not give permission to them to present the project assigned to them in the class.

Table 2 clearly indicates that 92.00, 88.89, 100.00, 100.00, 87.50, 88.89 and 95.65 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD female and 95.65, 93.33, 85.00, 90.00, 100.00, 96.81 and 92.31 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD male responded that their teachers ensures their participation in the project given to the class whereas 8.00, 11.11, 0.00, 0.00, 12.50, 11.11 and 4.35 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD female and 4.35, 6.67, 15.00, 10.00, 0.00, 3.19 and 7.69 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD male responded that their teachers do not ensure their participation in the project given to the class.

It can be seen in the Table 2 that 88.00, 88.89, 94.74, 50.00, 75.00, 91.11 and 52.17 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD female and 91.30, 80.00, 80.00, 70.00, 87.50, 84.04 and 69.23 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD male responded that they are given the permission to participate in debate competition whereas 12.00, 11.11, 5.26, 50.00, 25.00, 8.89 and 47.83 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD female and 8.70, 20.00, 20.00, 30.00, 12.50, 15.96 and 30.77 percent of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI and LD male responded that they are not given the permission to participate in debate competition in the school.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

On the basis of the analysis of the data, following are the findings of the present study:

- Majority of disabled female and male students are helped by their teachers in understanding difficult content taught in the class.
- Majority of disabled female and male students are provided the extra instruction by the teachers if needed in understanding the content.
- Majority of disabled female and male students are helped by the teachers in understanding the subject matter even outside the classroom.
- Majority of disabled female and male students are provided the extra help by their teachers outside the classroom also.
- Majority of disabled female and male students are permitted to present the project in the class by their teachers.
- Majority of both female and male disabled students are ensured the participation in the project by their teachers.
- Majority of disabled female and male students except half of mentally retarded, learning disabled female students are permitted to participate in the debate competition in the school.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study suggest that majority of the children with mild and moderate disabilities in mainstream classroom are helped by their teachers in understanding the difficult content in the class and provided the additional help in their studies. Teachers ensures their participation in the curricular activities of the school which helps them in their growth in academic performance. From the overall result it may be concluded that the children with special needs are helped in their academic performance through their integration in mainstream classroom. The attitudinal change of the teachers has helped in making the integration of the children with mild and moderate disabilities successful.

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